

Honda Fit/Jazz



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Based on my own experience buying and owning **two of these**, relatives owning two more, and Internet searches, including emails I have sent to relatives since 2010. For date this file last updated, please see page footer. For information on programming or other green subjects, please see a list of [this document's sister docs](#).

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1 Introduction

My wife and I love this car—the [second-generation 2007/2014 Honda Fit/Jazz](#). The second-generation is a bit longer in the nose in North America versus the first-generation, to get NHTSA **5-star crash rating** for occupants



in the front seats, and **4-star rating** for occupants in the rear. We call it our car the [TARDIS](#)—it's bigger on the inside. We loved our **2010** so much, when we gave away our other car to one of our kids, we bought a **2009**. And talked it up so much, that when a **cousin** and a **son-in-law** each needed cars, they each bought one—a **2011** and a **2013**. I think just by walking in and buying one. Does that make us **Fit Evangelists?**

In particular, we like:

- **Sitting up** nice and high. I have a tall spine (I am very tall when sitting up). No more **bending my neck** every time I get in and out!
- **Visibility** is very good for cars these days. Even for my 6'1" cousin. Enough glass in the back that you can turn left onto a 5-lane road (if too much trouble to get to a traffic light). Sitting right-seat on road trips, the large glass area makes looking around a lot of fun!

- So easy to **drive around town**! It is the same width as our previous compact cars, and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a foot shorter!
- A cabin made from high-strength steel allows a very-small (but perfectly-adequate) 1.5 liter engine, which together allow a 40 liter gas tank, which along with the tall roofline, allow placement of the gas tank underneath the front seats (instead of the rear), which together allow the next two items...
- **Magic back seats**! While our back seats fold down almost flat, we actually keep them folded **UP** almost all the time:
 - I once bought **18 full-size bags of mulch** at the garden center, piling them (on a tarp) amidships, right on the floor (not seats), without even touching whatever jackets and tools were rolling around the trunk!
 - On road trips, it is so easy to reach your **cooler, box of snacks, or bag of books** sitting there in on the floor in the back.
 - But when we need **seating for five**, we can fold down the seats and have that in seconds. Or half-down for a **passenger and big bag** going to the airport!
- The **gas mileage** is terrific. The automatic transmission gets better mileage than the stick, so we got the auto. Real-world:
 - **40 mpg on longer road trips** (to the Coast—NJ or DC—including all the in-town stuff we do while there).
 - 36 mpg on **shorter road trips** (to Chicago—slow-and-go traffic keeps that down).
 - 35 mpg on the **highway**, according to my cousin, who rarely goes out-of-state.
 - **30 mpg around town** to/from local work/lectures/meetings/shopping, 4 or 6 or 10 miles at a time.
 - **25 mpg around town** in the winter, according to my cousin with the most traffic and shortest commute.
- The radio reads **MP3s** on a thumb-/jump-/USB-/flash-drive. So download some podcasts, or borrow some books on CDs from the library and rip them, copy to a thumb-/jump-/USB-/flash-drive, insert it into the glove compartment, and enjoy long road trips!

And a **mediocre point**:

- [A writer says the Honda Fit, with snow tires, does way better than SUVs stopping and maintaining control in the snow. Also, ten tips for avoiding car pileups on the freeway.](#) Lots more on tires, [below](#).

But the Fit has a few **bad points**:

- **Black interior** shows all dirt and crumbs. Should use tan (like Toyota).
- Some **porpoising** on Michigan freeways (our legislature has refused to raise the gasoline tax since 1970-something). Seems to be fine in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and New Jersey. Presumably a side-effect of torsion-bar suspension.
- **Wipers** have an intermittent setting, but **not variable-intermittent**. OK, so they are fine for most conditions. And in very-light drizzle, I can “bump” the stalk to get a single wiper sweep. But I still miss the variable-intermittent setting of some of my other cars.
- We live in a cloudy climate and a place with lots of two-lane country roads—I want low-beams, fogs and running lights on whenever it is (1) dark, (2) cloudy/rainy/snowy, or (3) all other conditions, including good weather during the day. The Fit does **not turn off your lights** when you park the car, like my Toyotas. It instead dings at you to turn them off manually. And when you return, you must turn them on again. Someday, I will mod the car to do this automatically.
- **Poor lighting, odd-sized tires and wipers**, and a few more issues, but we tell you below what to do about these.

So all-in-all, an **excellent car**. We love them!

2 When you buy the car

- There are essentially **no used** Fits. So buy **new**. On the other hand, when my wife was getting an oil change or something, she asked, and that morning, someone had traded one in on a new Fit. So she put down \$200 on the spot to hold it until we could return with a checkbook and so on. Good thing, too, or it would have been gone in an hour. *Lesson Learned: **If you don't ask, the answer is No!***
- Honda Marketing sees the Fit as an “entry model”. So it is **priced cheaper** than their Civic, Accord or other models. Very reasonably-priced. But because of this, dealers do **not** haggle on price. Nada, zip, see below.
- Decide if you want a **base** or **Sport** model:
 - The **base model** is fine.
 - If you live rural or in the exurbs, the lack of *foglights* might be a real problem. A relative in the city doesn't care. Try the stuff below to see if lighting is OK.
 - Said to use **tires** the same size as a Ford Focus. So tires should not be an issue.

- The **Sport model** has cool wheels, low-profile tires, and a rear spoiler. Both of our Fits are Sports, and both our relatives got Sports:
 - The Sport has additional headlights described as **foglights**. But they are not really foglights—you can't turn them on without the lowbeams being on. On the other hand, this is exactly what you want—they help fill in lighting of stuff close up. If you live rural or in the exurbs like me, you will want these. Set the "foglights" on all the time (that the low beams are on).
 - The **rear spoiler** makes it impossible to use a \$50-150 **strap-on bicycle carrier/bike rack**—the straps need to go over the top, which can break the fiberglass spoiler. OK, not impossible—I put mine on anyway about four times, driving about 10 miles slow and easy, to good effect. But I don't want to break the spoiler, so whenever possible, I put the bikes inside the car. Fold down the rear seat, and remove the front wheels, you can put about two bikes in there with bags and helmets and so on. According to the Internet, the real solution is to do one of:
 - Get a **1¼"-box-hitch**, and a removable "ankle-biter" **platform-style 1¼"-box-hitch** bicycle carrier/bike rack. So far, I am too cheap to get these.
 - Make an **interior upright rack** from a block of wood and two fork holders, as in www.fitfreak.net/forums/1st-generation-gd-01-08/54155-bike-rack-roof-hitch-thule-yakima.html#post836178 or www.fitfreak.net/gallery/thumbnails.php?album=383 and <http://forums.mtbr.com/car-biker/making-rack-fitting-2-bikes-into-honda-fit-729935.html#post8341787>. I am going to do that, as soon as I get a round tuit.
 - The **antilock brakes** are very nice. But I think antilock brakes are included in the base model, too.
 - **Traction control**. Our 2010 has it, our 2009 doesn't. In snow in our 2010, I see the little icon come on, which gives me a warm fuzzy feeling that my car is caring for me. But I don't think it really does much—our 2009 is fine in the snow, too, it is **tires** (more on that in a minute!) that make it OK or not in the snow—not traction control. On the other hand, Consumer Reports says to get it. And my cousin says to get it, even if you drive only in town like him. Your choice, I guess.
 - The **Navie** system is overpriced and 5 years out-of-date, and if you pay for the overpriced update, it is 5 years out-of-date, too. Get a rack to charge and hold your smartphone up where you can see it.
 - The **tires** on the Sport are an **unusual size**, and will be very hard to replace. If your car has:
 - **P185/55R16 83H Dunlop SP Sport 7000 A/S** (340AA), good, keep these. I find they are OK on snow. They have a "M+S" on the side. www.tirerack.com says they are 4.2 on snow (OK). These came on our 2009, and on two relatives' Fit Sports.
 - **P185/55R16 83H Bridgestone Turanza EL470**, these are terrible in the snow. For more details, please see the [tire section](#). Try to get the salesman to replace them for free. Expect failure.
 - [A writer says the Honda Fit, with snow tires \(presumably Bridgestone Blizzaks\), does way better than SUVs stopping and maintaining control in the snow. Also, ten tips for avoiding car pileups on the freeway.](#)
- If your Fit does not have **floor mats**, try to get the salesman to throw them in for free. I failed completely; the salesman offered to sell me some at their cost. But I found them cheaper on <https://smile.amazon.com>, and got them there.
- If your Fit does not have a **cargo cover**, try to get the salesman to throw it in for free. I failed completely; the salesman offered to sell me one at their cost. But I found it cheaper on <https://smile.amazon.com>, and got it there.
- My cousin says to **not** get dark opaque **plastic window rain shields**. Fortunately, we didn't get these.

3 After you get the car: first few weeks

- Look up in the Owner's Manual how to tell your car to **unlock the car** when you put it in Park. Some process involving putting your right leg in, right leg out, and turning yourself about. Once done, your car will now behave nice, for all time, letting your passengers out when you stop. ☺
- If you got the **Sport model**, set your **foglights** on (whenever the low beams are).
- The **headlights** are too dark. On suggestion of the Internet:
 - I **raised** the aim point on each headlight by turning a screwdriver (Phillips #2) counterclockwise some turns. I picked out a particular road by our local middle school, dark, straight, with a rise I wanted illuminated. Every time I drove by, if my rise wasn't sufficiently illuminated, I later (at home) gave each

headlight another few turns. Until finally I got it right. Way better. Once I did the next step, I think I had to back it off some turns.

- I **replaced** the factory **Stanley** 9003 LL HB2 DOT EH4 12V 60/55W E12 C5 U L9 19 with **Osram** (not Sylvania) **Silverstars H4 (9003 LL)** (HB2) +50% 12V >60/55W, from <https://smile.amazon.com> or powerbulbs.com free shipping worldwide. **Way better** on dark rainy nights.
- If your Fit doesn't have **floor mats**, order them from <https://smile.amazon.com>. The driver's mat comes with a lock, so it won't slide underneath the gas pedal. Good idea.
- If your Fit doesn't have a **cargo cover**, order one from <https://smile.amazon.com>:
 - The 2009 and 2010 cargo covers have a fabric piece that is useless. Look up in the Internet how to remove and not use it, and don't screw in the snaps! Install as in www.fitfreak.net article on this subject.
 - The 2013 cargo cover does not have that piece. Enjoy!
- If you got the **Sport model**, if you seldom carry bikes, fold down the rear seats, remove the front wheels, and lay on their sides. If you must use your existing \$50-150 **strap-on** bicycle carrier/bike rack, to avoid breaking your fiberglass spoiler, **drive slow and easy** (I have done that, successfully, for 10 miles, four times). If you carry bikes a lot, the Internet suggests you do one of:
 - Get a **1¼"-box-hitch**, and a removable "ankle-biter" platform-style 1¼"-box-hitch bicycle carrier/bike rack. So far, I am too cheap to get these.
 - Make an **interior upright rack** from a block of wood and two fork holders, as in www.fitfreak.net/forums/1st-generation-gd-01-08/54155-bike-rack-roof-hitch-thule-yakima.html#post836178 or www.fitfreak.net/gallery/thumbnails.php?album=383 and <http://forums.mtbr.com/car-biker/making-rack-fitting-2-bikes-into-honda-fit-729935.html#post8341787>. I am going to do that, as soon as I get a round tuit.
- Download some **podcasts** (or borrow some **books on CDs** from the library and rip them), copy to a thumb-/jump-/USB-/flash-drive, insert into the glove compartment, and enjoy long road trips!

4 After you get the car: after a few months

4.1 Tires

- If you got a **Fit Sport**, your **tires** of a very strange size. Will be **very** hard to replace. If you kill a tire—we did, on a Friday night, way out-of-state, where it took FOREVER to get something underneath this car. In that state, no new tires were available; we were forced to get a take-off; of the two available in our state, one was bald, and the other was balder. We got the bald one. If your car has:
 - **P185/55R16 83H Dunlop SP Sport 7000 A/S (340AA)**, keep these. I find they are OK on snow, and do have a "M+S" on the side. www.tirerack.com says they are 4.2 on snow (OK). These came on our 2009, and came on two relatives' Fits.
 - **P185/55R16 83H Bridgestone Turanza EL470**, these are terrible in the snow. www.tirerack.com says they are 1.6 in snow, terrible, although marked "All-Season". These came on our new 2010. Our first winter, at a local park with only 3 or 4" of snow on the ground, we were the only car of 20 that needed a push to (1) get out of our parking space, then another push (2) to get out of the parking lot. Dump them. Due to the non-availability of any tires of this size, we were forced to replace ours with four **P205/50R16 87W Continental ExtremeContact DWS (540AA)**, very good on snow, tread=¾" wider than above, circumference=same (within 1 mm) as above, fit on the same rims as above. www.tirerack.com says they are 7.6 on snow, 7.3 on ice—terrific. Good, according to www.fitfreak.net/forums/1st-generation-gd-01-08/67313-tire-recommendations-please-195-55-15-a.html and www.fitfreak.net/forums/general-fit-talk/65512-tires-replace-these-dunlops-especially-all-season.html and www.consumerreports.org/cro/cars/tires-auto-parts/tires/ultra-high-performance-all-season-tire-ratings/ratings-overview.htm. And should be easy to replace if we destroy another tire. We are very happy with them.
 - [A writer says the Honda Fit, with snow tires \(presumably Bridgestone Blizzaks\), does way better than SUVs stopping and maintaining control in the snow. Also, ten tips for avoiding car pileups on the freeway.](#)
 - Keep these sizes in your car, or remember they are here in this document.
 - I have a lot more alternatives in a spreadsheet, when it took way too long to get new tires. Call me, if you need them.

4.2 Cabin air filter

I just found out the Fit has a **cabin air filter**. How come I didn't know that until 4+1 = 5 years of ownership?

- Add to your list of things to check once a year or so (I think the box said to check every 12,000 miles). Easy, once you know where they hide it <http://franksg384.hubpages.com/video/Cabin-Air-Filter-Honda-Fit>.
 - If bad, [order a new filter](#), and change it yourself.
 - The factory filters don't need it, but for **aftermarket** filters, use scissors to cut the six **outboard downwind glue-lines** so the holder-brackets have somewhere to go. Piece of cake.

4.3 Windshield wipers

Your **windshield wiper blades** last a long time (> 3 years). But they do wear out. And they are of very **weird sizes**—three different ones:

- In front, a long one, about **28"** or **710mm**. Ordinary width (8 or 9mm?).
- In front, a short one, about **14"**. Ordinary width (8 or 9mm?).
- In rear, a short one, about **14"**. But narrow (4 or 6mm?).

As I recall, Costco had nice prices on replacement blades (the whole structure), but for only **one** of the three types. Besides, my factory blades seem to have directional (handed) aerodynamics, absent in the after-market blades, and I want to keep them. What if not having them degrades my mileage? I resolved to get refills of just the flexible rubber medium.

So I researched it online (www.bernardiparts.com, eBay and <https://smile.amazon.com>), and found it cheapest and most reliable to just call up the **dealer**, ask for the **Parts Department**, and ask for a set of **refills**. Actually, I got two sets—one set for the car that needed them, and another set for the car that didn't yet. Came with part numbers:

- Front, long **76622-TK6-A01**.
- Front, short **76632-SMA-004**.
- Rear, short **76632-S2K-004**.

When you change them, be careful—you need to reuse the **metal stiffener pieces**, and their **factory bend**. So keep them next to the car, never turning their orientation, so everything goes back together right. Please see www.fitfreak.net/forums/fit-diy-repair-maintenance/61962-diy-video-replacing-beam-blade-wiper-inserts.html.

4.4 Recalls

Once a year, check your car's VIN for any recalls <http://recalls.honda.com>. We had one, fixed for free!

4.5 More

Lots more information at www.fitfreak.net > Search. You don't have to login unless you want to post.

5 After you get the car: someday

- Ask around to get a **service manual** for the car, or at least a **good circuit diagram**. *Can you find one?*
- Mod car to **turn off your lights when park** car.
 - Obtain wire connectors, fuses, add-a-circuit fuse tap (get another for the next project), and Radio Shack 275-226 12VDC/30Ampere SPST Automotive Relay \$6.49.
 - Add fuses to Daylight pos 8 and 18.
 - Connect headlights to ignition as in www.fitfreak.net/forums/fit-diy-repair-maintenance/14462-headlights-off-ignition.html and <http://the12volt.com/relays/relays.asp>.
- Mod car to have **fog lights stay on even with high beam**, as in www.fitfreak.net/forums/fit-diy-repair-maintenance/26236-diy-independent-fogs.html (also see www.fitfreak.net/forums/fit-yourself-discuss-do-yourself-repair-maintenance/26959-diy-independent-fog-w-original-switch.html and www.fitfreak.net/forums/fit-interior-exterior-illumination/31717-truely-independent-fogs-w-high-beams.html):
 - Independent Fogs How To for Dummies, simple and easy (hopefully).

- First disconnect the negative side of battery to keep for shorting anything (not a must, just prefer).
- Second remove the fuse panel cover.
- Third remove the bottom panel, removing these two panels will give you access to the relay/fuse panel.
- Fourth find the fog light relay which is on the bottom right on the panel, use a small flathead driver to remove the relay.
- Find the Red/White wire on the back of the relay and cut it.
- Take a piece of wire and connect it to the relay side (I solder mine but you can just crimp it) and connect it to ground I unbolted the 10mm right behind the relay and connected it with a ring terminal and cap or tape off the other end.
- Now you're done with the fog light relay reinstall the relay on the fuse panel.
- So far so good I hope, now you need to power the fog light switch to do this you will need to remove the top steering column cover to expose the 16-pin harness.
- Once removed look to the left for the 16-pin plug and disconnect it.
- Find the Red/Yellow wire and cut it. Then, connect a long piece of wire to the coming from the harness, and run that wire down to the under dash fusebox. Cap or tape off the other end. (Again, i solder my connections but you can use butt connector or crimp.)
- Once at the fusebox, connect the wire to an add-a-circuit, (which i installed two 10amp fuses only because I am running HID's in the fogs)
- Find the spare fuse slot #24 which is ignition switched.
- Now plug your add-a-circuit to the empty slot.
- Then you can plug back in your 16-pin plug to the headlight switch.
- And your fog light circuit is now completely independent from the rest of the lighting circuit, and will/should operate whenever you have your ignition switched on.
- You now will just need to re-install your steering column cover.
- And re-install the bottom cover and the relay/fusebox cover.
- Finally you're done!!! No other indicators on when fogs are in use.
- Another alternative location for powering the fog switch is to put your add-a-circuit in the #22 fuse, which powers the dash, front parking, etc lights and your fogs will only come on when the park light are switched on.

Happy motoring!

-End.- [send comments to the author](#)